

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of

Historic Properties Form

1. Name of Property

historic	Steinberg House
other	110 S. Adams Street

2. Location

street and number	110 S. Adams Street	___	not for publication
city, town	Rockville	___	vicinity
county	Montgomery		

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name	Thomas W. Simpson		
street and number	110 S. Adams Street	telephone	
city, town	Rockville	state	MD
		zip code	20850

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Montgomery Co.	liber	18656	folio	363
city, town	Rockville	tax map	GR32	tax parcel	N480
		tax ID number			

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ___ Contributing Resource in National Register District
___ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
___ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Recorded by HABS/HAER
___ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
___ Other: ___

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
___ district	___ public	___ agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	___ landscape	Noncontributing
___ structure	___ both	___ commerce/trade	1
___ site		___ recreation/culture	___
___ object		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion	___
		___ social	___
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	___
		___ education	1
		___ funerary	___
		___ government	___
		___ health care	___
		___ industry	___
		___ work in progress	___
		___ unknown	___
		___ vacant/not in use	___
		___ other:	___
		___	___

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory

7. Description

Condition

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Summary

The residence at 110 S. Adams Street, known as the Steinberg House, was constructed in c. 1929. The house is an American Foursquare, a popular housing type of the first decades of the 20th century. The house features a square form, hipped roof with wide flared eaves, 3/1 windows, and a hipped roof front dormer. It retains a high degree of physical integrity through the retention of the original windows and door, the wide front porch, and lack of intrusive additions. There is one small one-story addition to the rear, which is likely a former porch enclosed to add a first floor bathroom to the house.

Description

The c. 1929 Steinberg House faces west at 110 S. Adams Street in Rockville. The house is located on a quiet residential street with contemporary early 20th century houses and mature trees surrounding it. It is situated across the street from the grounds of the former Rockville Academy and along the Christ Episcopal School property to the rear. The southern boundary is adjacent to a parcel of land that was proposed for dedication to the City to be used as Church Street. However, the right of way was not accepted by the City and the street was not built. The property is in the process of being transferred to adjacent landowners, including 110 S. Adams. The lot slopes to the east, with the house constructed into a fairly steep bank.



This house is a square, 2½-story American Foursquare dwelling that exhibits elements of the Prairie and Craftsman styles, popular in the first three decades of the 20th century. The house, which encloses 1,334 square feet of space, is constructed of light wood framing finished with a rough stucco coat. The house is two bays wide and two bays deep with a small rear addition on the northeast corner. It rests on



an elevated rusticated concrete block foundation and has a full basement beneath, which was partially excavated into the bank. The house has a hipped roof covered with composition shingles. The edges flare slightly over wide enclosed eaves, a feature common to the Prairie style. An interior brick chimney punctuates the roof along the north side.

A full-width frame front porch is situated along the first floor of the west façade. The porch rests on rusticated concrete block piers with three Tuscan columns to

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support its hipped roof. An added stick-and-rail balustrade encloses the porch with a hinged gate in front of the front door. Three wooden steps provide access to the porch.

The fenestration on this house is regular on all sides with two windows per floor except on the north façade, where a smaller kitchen window is present toward the rear of the house and a window splits the two floors at the interior landing. The windows are all 3/1 sashes within unornamented wood frames. Most are the original wood windows, although two have recently been replaced with 3/1 vinyl sashes (one on the second floor, west façade, south window and the other on the second floor, east façade, north window). Two smaller windows in the east façade of the rear addition are also 3/1 vinyl sashes, but their wood frames replicate the original wood frames in dimension. The basement windows contain three-pane operable sashes. Nearly all of the windows possess vinyl storm windows.

On the first floor of the main (west) façade, the windows are paired in the south bay and the front door occupies the north bay. The original Craftsman door is intact and contains two vertical panels inset below three lights, which mimic the windows in their proportions.

A main feature of the house is the central stucco-finished dormer, which has a hipped roof with flared eaves that reflect the main roofline. The dormer features small side-by-side windows facing west; the north window is the original 4-pane awning and the south is a 6-pane replacement awning.

Due to the slope of the site, the rear deck and small addition are elevated on square wood posts. The small one-story addition has a frame construction with a stucco finish. It may have been a rear porch, which was later enclosed to accommodate a first-floor bathroom and storage area. Since 1986, some alterations have occurred to this addition. The deck was constructed to replace an earlier rear porch and a newly added staircase leads to the north, replacing a staircase that led to the south. A door that entered into the addition from the east façade has been replaced with a 3/1 vinyl sash window. A door was added on the south façade to provide rear access to the house.



Beneath the deck on the south side of the building is a small enclosed area. This enclosure appears to be a historic alteration to the home. The siding is lapped wood siding and the door is a historic four-light over three-panel door. One small six-light window provides additional lighting.

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The interior of the house, currently undergoing restoration, features plaster walls, the original wood floors and baseboards, and segmental arched doorways between interior rooms on the first floor. The floorplan has been minimally altered on the first and second floors and the attic remains unfinished.

Other than minor alterations, which are almost exclusively to the rear of the house, the Steinberg House is remarkably intact. Its form, massing, materials, and details remain as they have throughout its 73-year existence.



8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Significance dates	c. 1929	Architect	
Specific dates	c. 1929	Builder	Guy L. Carter

Evaluation for:

☒ National Register ☐ Maryland Register ☐ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Significance

The house at 110 S. Adams Street was built in 1929 by investor Guy Carter, who constructed several other houses on S. Adams in the mid-1920s. These houses, typical of the period's residential styles, fulfilled the need for practical, comfortable houses with simple lines enlivened by touches of picturesque or period detailing. The house is significant for its architecture and for its association with its long-term owners, the Steinbergs, reputedly Rockville's first Jewish family.¹ The house is an intact, representative example of early 20th century residential architecture. It is particularly demonstrative of the popular American Foursquare design in its form, its relatively unaltered square footprint, its' hipped roof and hipped roof dormer, and the full-width front porch. The house also retains many of its original features, including the windows, door, trim, and interior arched doorways.

This house is also significant as the home of the Steinberg family, noted Rockville residents and the first Jewish family in the city. The family was a pioneering merchant family, choosing religious isolation in order to establish their successful retail businesses in Rockville. The son of the original owners and a resident of the house during his youth, Joseph Steinberg, is known throughout Rockville for his contributions to the city and in "helping the community prosper."²

In addition, the Steinberg House contributes to the overall setting of the 100 block of S. Adams Street, which remains residential in character. The street's mature trees, similar setbacks, and dwellings of a consistent period, style, and size combine to create a physical expression of the neighborhood's historic development.

Narrative History

At the beginning of the 19th century, 32 acres of land, from the west side of Washington Street to the town limits belonged to Solomon Holland, the Register of Wills. In 1864 the Holland heirs sold the

¹ Jeffs, Jeannine, oral interview with Joseph Steinberg conducted on 12 March, 1984 (on file at Peerless Rockville) and McGuckian, Eileen, "Seasonal Memories." Draft, dated 12/20/89 (on file at Peerless Rockville).

² "Lifelong Rockville Resident Joe Steinberg Dies." *Gazette*, 21 February 2001.

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property to Methodist Minister Basil Barry, and it descended to the family of his son-in-law Dr. E. E. Stonestreet and remained undeveloped.³ In 1889, Adams Street was extended south to cut through the Rockville Academy grounds when the lots at the south end of the street were platted as part of the "Rockville Heights" subdivision.⁴ However, the 100 block of S. Adams Street remained relatively undeveloped with open fields until the second decade of the 20th century.

The first building constructed on Adams Street extended was the Disciples of Christ (Rockville Christian Church) parsonage at 100 S. Adams Street in 1917. This dwelling was followed in the mid-1920s by several speculative houses built by investor Guy Carter. Guy and Mary Hurley Carter had purchased 40,500 square feet south of the parsonage in 1923. The deed for this transaction and further deeds from Mr. Carter carried the exclusionary covenant that "no building to be erected at a cost of less than \$3,500," effective through 1938.⁵

During the period of 1924-1929, Carter subdivided the property and constructed houses at 104, 108, and 110 S. Adams.⁶ The house at 106 S. Adams, while similar in form, massing, and materials to Carter's building at 110, was built by Walter and Mary Davis, who had purchased the lot from Carter in 1927. The houses at 106 and 110 S. Adams share an American Foursquare form. These two homes have slightly flared hipped roofs with centered front dormers. The full-width front porches have classical columns, but in each the fenestration, trim, and other detailing varies. It is possible that the plans relied on catalog homes, which were sold through such companies as Sears and Roebuck, Montgomery Ward, Aladdin, and Gordon-Van Tine. These catalogs were a prominent source for house designs among owners and speculative builders alike during the late 'teens into the 1930s.

Guy Carter built the house at 110 S. Adams, known as the Steinberg House, in c. 1929. Initially, the Steinberg family rented the house beginning in about 1930 until they purchased it in 1936. It is likely that the family rented during this period due to the economic restraints of the Great Depression. Ben David Steinberg and his wife had emigrated to the United States from Russia and Lithuania, respectively. They came to Rockville via Baltimore in 1908 and opened a general store at 241 E. Montgomery Avenue with the family's first residence located in an apartment above.⁷ The shop soon began to sell men's clothing and became a successful retail operation later named Steinberg's Department Store.

The Steinbergs were the first Jewish family to live in Rockville and were among the first in Montgomery County. They were well known members of the Rockville community, especially their

³ Montgomery County Land Records, STS1/587 (1846).

⁴ Records of the Meetings of Trustees of Rockville Academy for Dec. 26, 1889 discusses the cutting through of the street and the need for fencing and plantings to protect the Academy property.

⁵ Land Records 324/448 (1923). Parcel 275 feet along Adams Street by 155 feet deep.

⁶ Dates for construction of the houses and sales based on Assessment Records, Land Records 1923-1938, and Plats (1917, 1930.)

⁷ Jeffs, Jeannine, Steinberg interview and McGuckian, Eileen, "Seasonal Memories."

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son Joseph (1915-2001). Joe Steinberg followed his father into the retail industry, working first at Steinberg's and later at his brother's clothing store, the Men's Quality Shop. He opened Jaye's Bootery Family Shoe Store in around 1950.⁸ After much of the downtown area, including the family's stores, was razed to construct the new county courthouse, Mr. Steinberg gave up the retail profession to pursue a successful career as a real estate broker.

Mr. Steinberg remembers the family being somewhat isolated in their faith during his youth. There was one Jewish farmer in Gaithersburg, and a Jewish population in Georgetown. Steinberg would take the streetcar from Rockville to Georgetown for his Bar Mitzvah training at Keshet Israel Synagogue. The family also practiced some ceremonies, such as marriages and Bar Mitzvahs in the family's store or home.⁹ Steinberg also recalled that his family opened their house during the Chanukah season to share Jewish traditions with his friends.¹⁰

Joseph Steinberg was a founding member of Ohr Kodesh Congregation, a charter member of the Cornerstone Masonic Lodge in 1949, a member of Lions and Civitan Clubs, and President of Rockville Chamber of Commerce 1974-75. Recognition of Mr. Steinberg's years of community service culminated in 1984, when he was named Citizen of the Year by the Rockville Chamber of Commerce.¹¹ He is further memorialized with a dedication bench and stone-mounted plaque located outside the Old Brick Courthouse, which pays tribute to Steinberg, also known as "Mr. Rockville."

The Steinberg family retained ownership of the house at 110 S. Adams for over 50 years, selling it in 1988 to Leslie Muller. In 2000, Thomas Simpson, the current owner purchased the property.

⁸ Jeffs, oral interview and "Lifelong Rockville Resident Joe Steinberg Dies."

⁹ Jeffs, p. 9-10.

¹⁰ McGuckian, p.2.

¹¹ "Lifelong Rockville Resident Joe Steinberg Dies."

9. Major Bibliographical References

Jeffs, Jeannine. Transcript of oral interview with Joseph Steinberg, conducted on 12 March 1984 (on file at Peerless Rockville).

Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland.

“Lifelong Rockville Resident Joe Steinberg Dies.” *Gazette*, 21 February 2001.

McGuckian, Eileen, "Seasonal Memories." Draft dated 20 February 1989 (on file at Peerless Rockville).

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of project area 9,450 square feet

Acreage surveyed _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale

Verbal boundary description and justification

Part of Lots 11 and 12, Block 2, Adams Street Extended, Original Town of Rockville.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Anne Omeda Brockett
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organization	City of Rockville, MD
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date October, 2002

street & number 111 Maryland Avenue

telephone 240-314-8234

city or town	Rockville
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state	MD
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The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
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